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CYBERPHILOSOPHY — OUTSIDERS OF BODY AND THOUGHT

[Nick Land, *Fanged Noumena. Collected Writings 1987–2007*, Falmouth-New York: Urbanomic 2011]

I have found out about existence of Nick Land by Internet search. What stroke me the most, was that fresh neo-deleuzian/neo-guattarian language mixed up with cybernetic vocabulary. After receiving this book I thought that all the articles will be written like this and even I could find a creative development of such an application of language. I was not disappointed, but either I haven't felt intellectual satisfaction.

First essays are from history of philosophy. They do not introduce original thought, but the composition and language itself is very interesting. Land's reading of Georges Bataille, Friedrich Nietzsche, Immanuel Kant is proper, but unfortunately I can see no newness, no own interpretation, just pointing out what have been accomplished by "philosophical giants". There are many brilliant assumptions, many shortcuts that expanded could give rise to very original problems, but this is the specificity of Land's writing style — poetic, cybernetic, and what is most important — unwilling to force itself under the strict criteria of academia writing. There are footnotes, references, erudition data, but reader must be feeling like approaching distant planet, because of excessive usage of unpopular words, aphoristic summation and metaphors. Thus I don't find it faulty, but rather in terms of constant experimentation.

I would like to focus on Land's notion of artificial death, which is represented by Synthanatos (p. 326). He states that this concept represents virtual machinic circuits, in which time can't occur. In this sense, he encompasses, Synthanathos as an function of unconscious is

timeless. This passage is very Deleuzian — one may say, that as all Land's writings, but this fragment especially resembles passages from *Difference and Repetition*. What is most important and worthy mentioning — synthetic death is today's quest for immortality. Although I don't have intellectual satisfaction from this passage, because Land jumps from one conclusion to another without expanding his thought and arguments. So there is a benefit and a loss from being academic outsider — if not in the sense of complete depart from university, then in weaker meaning as one that don't have to use all the methods of history of philosophy validated by local scientific committees. We should remember about Land's writing style — philosophically infused, but essayistic. Returning to the concept of Synthanathos — I can't fully agree with Land's assumption, that "Inorganic Thanathos wrecks order, organic Eros preserves it, and as carbon-dominium is softened-up by machine plague, deterritorializing replicants of nomad-cyberrevolution close in upon the reterritotrializing reproducers of the sedentary human security system, hacking into the macropod" (p. 330). I think that Land misses one thing — when talking about cybernetics and using it as an method such a binary oppositions wouldn't be necessary, because all that is would be located as an bio-technical form. So as in the material, visible, machinic plane of existence, same "laws" should inherit obligation to cross basic distinctions for life/death, organism/inorganic, living/machine and so on. Ludwig Wittgenstein said that "philosophical problems arise when *language* goes on holiday". Land's language haven't been anywhere but in holidays. It's not an accusation, but exposing a plain fact, when we use technical methods of expressing our thought and ideas, we have to look into consequences of such a freedom of articulations of relation between philosophical, psychoanalytical and cybernetic terms. His literary style is very smooth and surely there is no re-mixing concepts from mentioned disciplines to delude potential reader.

Although there are too much metaphors, not literally, but when Land uses philosophical and cybernetics notions and combines them I could not get the impression, that essence of this writing is pure metaphoric with a little or none reference to the external world, where real-material technologies (even considered in their ontological and metaphysical function) interact at the plane of existence.

In the essay *Cybergothic* Land's focus goes to the hybridization of opposite domains of reality. First of all he states that "Anthropomorphic surplus-value is not analytically extricable from transhuman machineries" (p. 347). So the tendency of transhumanization have not only begun, but became inseparable from, what we could name — transcendental imagination. Whenever (trans)human thinks about his being in the world, he makes a reference to the transhuman state of his body and mind. This is important, because the problem is not delineated to the future, but radically close to our contemporary existence. We could ask if we are still human in such a circumstance? Before giving and reply we must consider what folds to this state. Land asserts that "Markets, desire and science fiction are all parts of the infrastructure" (p. 347). So we are speaking about industrialization of imagination, that is already implemented in our transhuman futures and serves as reservoir for our fate scenarios. Such a postapocalyptic approach definitely is unique and important, because it reveals that transhumanism as an movement opposed to humanism or posthumanism is basically a metaphysical tendency no more than it is a technological one.

Concluding — Land's work plays for me, and I assume that other readers will find it intellectually satisfactory in the same way, a role of inspiration. When I'm reading Land a thought comes to my mind, that I have read it or heard it before, but speaking in his unique manner there is a kind of newness present in the process of mental working through of his imaginative style. I recommend this book not only to Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari scholars, but to all which want to acquire new schemata, see that things could be expressed differently. In this collection of essays there are many crystals of thought, that explode with interesting ideas and conclusion. Lands writing is an unique phenomenon, which shouldn't be omitted or forgotten.